

Honorable Claudia Wilken
1301 Clay Street
Oakland, CA
94612

20-cv-3919 CW

FILED

JAN 27 2025

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Dear Honorable Claudia Wilken,

January 14, 2025

NC
As a mom of a freshman college diver, I am writing to you with great concern for what is happening to the sport of diving for male divers. My son fell in love with diving when he was in the 3rd grade. He did club diving, traveled all over the US to compete, and he is good, really good. Diving at the D1 level had always been a dream of his. This dream was amplified by his recovery from almost losing his left leg in a diving accident back in 2020. One would think that would curtail a dream, but not to Miles. He wanted it more. After 3 surgeries and a 3 year recovery, Miles believes that God gave him a second chance to return to the sport that he loves most. He fought hard, persevered, and overcame so much just to walk on the board. This hard work paid off because in November of 2023 he was recruited by the University of Kentucky.

Just yesterday, Miles was informed by his coach that there is not a spot for him for the upcoming year. However, as of now this coach has recruited 2 new divers into the program. Devastated once again, Miles is left with sadness and anger. As he learns more, he realizes that an unrealistic roster cap rule of only allowing a team (outside of football) 22 male divers as opposed to 33 in other conferences. He is a devoted student athlete who shows up early and stays late. Being a highly coachable athlete, he commits himself everyday 100%. He appreciates the hard work and takes nothing for granted. His craft is the 10 meter platform, and as goal oriented as he is, his dive list is growing. Aside from getting an education, all he wants to do is train and be a student athlete. He is realizing that this dream, one that he has had since he was a young kid, could be fleeting. An unrealistic roster cap, not his inability, or lack of coachability, but a roster cap made by bureaucrats, who have probably never been in his shoes, are deciding his future.

I implore you to reexamine this roster cap and grandfather in current students. The more I read about the diving world for males, the more I realize that it is diminishing. Athletics are essential to the emotional and social growth of everyone. More so, when you have a male athlete whose talent potential is growing with each training day, that deserves to be nurtured rather than hindered.

Thank you for reading this letter and listening to my concerns.

Whitney Ward

The Neuman Group

3363 Tates Creek Road, Ste.204
Lexington, KY 40502

LOUISVILLE KY 400

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1301 Clay Street
Oakland, CA 94612

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